



**U.S. Department of Justice**

*United States Attorney  
Eastern District of California*

501 I Street, Suite 10-100  
Sacramento, California 95814

916/554-2700  
Fax 916/554-2900

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**July 30, 2004**

**TWENTY DEFENDANT METHAMPHETAMINE CASE INVOLVING STOCKTON  
DEFENDANTS SUCCESSFULLY CONCLUDES**

SACRAMENTO--United States Attorney McGregor W. Scott, announced today that Senior U.S. District Judge Edward J. Garcia sentenced defendant ROMAN ANGUIANO RAMOS to 135 months in federal prison for methamphetamine trafficking.

ROMAN RAMOS was the last of 20 defendants arrested on February 12, 2002, in OPERATION SMOOTHRIDE, a joint investigation by the Stockton Police Department, the San Joaquin County METRO Narcotics Task Force, the FBI and the DEA. The investigation initially focused on Ramon Ramos' brother, codefendant Jorge Ramos, and spread to encompass 19 other persons from the Stockton area. The following is a list of the defendants and the sentence they received:

JORGE CUAHTEMOC RAMOS, age 29, sentenced to 11 years

MIGUEL ANGEL ARROYO, age 28, sentenced to 8 1/2 years

CESAR HUGO OROZCO, age 29, sentenced to 10 years

RAMON ANGUIANO RAMOS, age 38, sentenced to 135 months

ALEJANDRO RAMOS, age 42, sentenced to 4 years

LUIS LOPEZ MIRANDA, age 43, sentenced to 10 years

CESAR UBENCE RODRIGUEZ, age 31, sentence 9 years

RUBEN MENDOZA, age 21, sentenced to 37 months

HERIBERTO RAMOS, JR., age 20, sentenced to 21 months

STEVE LATODD SHELTON, age 38, sentenced to 2 years

ERIKA LARA, age 23, sentenced to 15 months

ALBERTO GARCIA, age 29, sentenced to 2 years

GWENITH BIRDSONG, age 51, sentenced to Probation

SUSAN DENYSE VALENCIA, age 51, sentenced to Deferred Prosecution

RUBEN VEGA PEREZ, age 21, sentenced to 18 months

MARIA LUZ HERNANDEZ, age 23, sentenced to Probation

MARCOS VENEGAS GONZALEZ, age 27, sentenced to 30 months

JOHN CABALES, age 29, sentenced to 4 years

JOSE GUTIERREZ-CAMPOS, age 29, sentenced to 4 years

RONNIE BELASCO, JR., age 19, dismissed in favor of state prosecution

Most of the defendants also received terms of supervised release of 1 to 5 years which commence on their release from prison. Defendants ROBERTO AGUAYO-BRISENO JAVIER JIMENEZ GOMES, and ANDRES GARCIA LUGO remain fugitives. The investigation focused on the distribution of pound quantities of methamphetamine and sub-pound quantities of cocaine distributed by defendants Jorge Ramos and Ramon Ramos.

During the investigation, a wiretap was placed on defendant Jorge Ramos' telephone, which expanded the investigation to include numerous other persons involved in buying and/or selling methamphetamine and cocaine in the Stockton area.

The Ramos drug investigation, prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorneys Mary L. Grad and Richard J. Bender, follows a series of similar investigations in Stockton during the summer of 2001 and 2002, which resulted in the federal prosecutions of approximately 20 South Side Stockton gang members and 20 other persons, all of whom were involved in methamphetamine trafficking.

According to United States Attorney McGregor W. Scott, these investigations and prosecutions are part of the continuing effort by the involved law enforcement agencies to combat methamphetamine trafficking in Stockton and San Joaquin County. "The Central Valley of California has become one of the largest sources of methamphetamine in the country. Methamphetamine trafficking prosecutions are one of the top priorities of this office and we will continue to vigorously prosecute those persons involved in this illegal activity."

A copy of this press release is available at <http://www.usdoj.gov/usao/cae/home>, select Press Releases.